

Design of newest Oklahoma City library pays tribute to oil industry

The new northwest Oklahoma City library branch is expected to be completed in February and open in March.

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Eight faux oil derricks dominate the interior decor of the new library under construction at 5200 NW 122.

The bases of the derricks serve as glassed-in meeting rooms and quiet rooms, while the top of the derricks reach through the roof and are skylights.

Other design features include glass exterior walls across much of the structure, allowing for natural lighting.

The library is expected to be completed in February and open in March, said Kim Terry, spokeswoman for the Metropolitan Library System.

“The building should actually be finished in February, but it will take some time to move everything into the building to get ready for the public, hence the March opening date,” Terry said.

Construction began in March 2010.

The library is the 18th facility in the Metropolitan Library System and the third largest library in the system.

City officials plan to name it for former Mayor Patience Latting.

“The new library will feature a collection of nearly 156,000 books, magazines, CDs, and DVDs,” Terry said.

“All materials are purchased specifically for the northwest library.”

Wi-Fi hot spot

The library also will have more than 60 computers for public use, all with Internet access.

The library will be a free Wi-Fi hot spot.

The facility will include two large meeting rooms that can be combined for a capacity of 200 people, along with activity rooms and programming rooms adjacent to the teen and children's areas and multiple quiet study areas.

The construction cost is \$8.2 million, with funding coming from the 2000 and 2007 Oklahoma City general obligation bonds.

Funding for the furnishings and staffing will come from the Metropolitan Library System.

Efficient features

The 35,000-square-foot building utilizes many features that will make it one of the first Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certified libraries in Oklahoma.

Some of those features include a geothermal heating and cooling system, drip irrigation system, low-flow faucets and toilets, and recycling bins for the customers and staff.

LWPB Architecture designed the building with general contracting by Atlas.

Julie Ballou has been named manager of operations for the new library.

Most recently Ballou served in the same capacity at the Ronald J. Norrick Downtown Library.

Ballou has worked with library system for 18 years.

Ballou is in the process of hiring 35 to 40 people in the positions of librarians, library aides and circulation clerks.

Positions will be filled through applications made on the library system's website.



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